

Industry Links Begin Before Leaving School

Industry links are being strengthened for secondary school students before they graduate from high school.

The PICSE Industry Placement Scholarship Program has proved to be an invaluable stepping stone for many past PICSE students, especially in securing future work opportunities.

University of Western Australia's (UWA) PICSE Science Investigation Officer Belinda Pope said with PICSE linking students to industry, both mentors and students are grateful for the scholarship opportunity.

She said many students are being offered paid and volunteer work on completion of their industry placement.

Dr Todd Gaines, from UWA's School of Plant Biology, was an industry mentor this year and was extremely impressed with his scholarship student, Josh.

"After hosting Josh during the PICSE placement, it was clear that he is a highly talented individual," Todd said.

"Given his keen interest in the field, we hope to continue to have Josh working with our lab group and further foster his interests and abilities."

Ms Pope said the PICSE Industry Placement Scholarship reunion demonstrated the impact PICSE students have had on those around them throughout their scholarship.

"Mentors and speakers from the camp have jumped at the opportunity to attend the reunion and speak to the students about further opportunities," she said.

Those attending the reunion included Winthrop Professor Shaun Collin from the School of Animal Biology and UWA Oceans Institute, Alison Ritchie and Rowena Long from UWA and Botanic Gardens & Parks



Josh working on AHRI (Australian Herbicide Resistance Initiative) research using Gel Electrophoresis in UWA lab

Authority, as well as Matthew Johnston from Lobster Harvest.



..... From the Director

Report Card for 2010



Brett, Tessa, and Callum (standing left to right) with an IPS mentor during the PICSE-UWA Industry Placement Program 2010/11

The objective of the PICSE program is "to raise awareness and interest in the science that underpins food and fibre production, quality and sustainability and increase participation in tertiary studies and professional careers." This national program achieves this by implementing four core areas of activity: Science Class Engagement; Camps and Industry Placement Scholarships; Teacher Professional Development; Production of Teaching Resources.

Every aspect of the PICSE program is independently evaluated; this provides PICSE with a "Report Card" to monitor progress and demonstrate outcomes.

Report Card Summary:

Science Education Officers (SEOs)

- Over the last 2 years the PICSE program has grown from 6 to 9 Activity Centres, with a corresponding increase of SEOs from 6 to 15.

School Visits by SEOs

- 7,304 Year 11/12 science students presented to in science classes in 160 schools.

Science Investigation Awards (Yrs 5-12)

- 1,082 high school students from 81 schools participated in 11 SIA programs.
- 86% of primary school students and 71% of high school students found that

their involvement positively helped their school work.

Science Camps and Industry Placement (Yrs 11-12)

- 7 Activity Centres ran camps and industry placements for 152 students.
- 18 students were awarded "Travelling Scholarships" to a camp in another State.
- 72% of the students had a better understanding of university science study pathways.
- 32% increase in students intending to study at post graduate level, rising from 54% to 86%.
- 55% of the students had positively changed their attitude towards primary industry careers.

Professional Development Activities for Science Teachers

- 7 Professional Development (PD) courses reached 154 Yr 11/12 teachers.
- 12 teachers were awarded "Travelling Scholarships" to a PD in another State.
- 70% of teachers had an increased understanding of the importance of primary industries.
- 88% of the teachers gained an increased knowledge of primary industry career pathways.

PICSE continues to build momentum with two new Activity Centres coming on line midyear and several new industry partners joining the existing PICSE network.

Assoc Prof David Russell



Riverland Region Offers Plenty of Career Inspiration

South Australia's Riverland region has inspired Peter's future career motivations.

The Year 12 student from Golden Grove High School in Adelaide was a recent PICSE GrowSmart Industry Placement Student.

"We travelled to places in the Riverland meeting scientists who showed us what's involved in horticulture and then organised experiments for us to do," he said.

"We had a lot of fun and by the end of the camp we were all good friends. The highlight was meeting people who had different talents and learning science from great scientists."

During his placement, Peter worked with Peter Magarey, a grapevine disease expert, and spent two days with Brett

Rosenzweig, a scientist who advises almond growers.

He completed his placement with Biological Services, a company which uses biological control to deal with pest insects.

PICSE has helped to provide a promising career path for Peter, who was born in the Congo, but due to the war, moved to Zambia in his early years.

He arrived in Australia six years ago with his sister and brother-in-law. Due to the war, he was separated from his parents.

Peter said the PICSE program provided him the opportunity to gain a tremendous insight into the industry.

"I am now considering studying agriculture



Peter with Peter Magarey inspecting grapes during the PICSE GrowSmart Industry Placement Camp

at university so hopefully in the future I will be one of the scientists helping Australia and the world to produce better crops," he said.



Advisors Sample Tassie's Finest Career Selections



A previous group of Careers Advisors tasting Science in the Vineyard

A group of careers advisors sampled some of Tasmania's finest career selections at a recent conference in Hobart.

23 careers advisors from VIC, NSW and TAS attended the conference, gaining insights into the University of Tasmania's School of Agricultural Science and enjoying some of Tasmania's culinary delights.

Professor Holger Meinke, newly appointed Head of School and Director

of the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR), addressed the conference, talking about the looming worldwide food production crisis.

Former Head of School, Associate Professor Peter Lane, outlined advantages for students enrolling at the University of Tasmania's School of Agricultural Science.

Some of these included small class sizes, excellent quality of academic teaching

staff, and the wide variety of disciplines available because of the presence within the School of the Centre for Food Safety, TIAR and the Australian Institute for Wine Research.

Of particular interest to the visiting careers advisors was the large number of generous scholarships on offer.

The School of Agricultural Science offers academically talented, first-year interstate students a HECS-free scholarship for the four year BAgSc Hons degree course.

What's more, the new Bachelor of Agriculture degree allows students with an entrepreneurial flair to combine agricultural and business units to better prepare them for commercial enterprises.

Opportunities afforded to secondary students by the Australia-wide PICSE program were explained by Associate Professor David Russell, founder and National Director of PICSE.

He explained the benefits to primary industries and pre-tertiary students of the Industry Placement Scholarship program in recruiting talented students into agricultural science.